



Meeting Notes

Signage Focus Group Meeting

8:30 a.m. – Thursday, July 2, 2009

APS Conference Room, 101 West Cherry Ave, Flagstaff, AZ

1. Welcome and Introductions

In attendance:

Greg Brooks, City of Flagstaff
Gerry Craig, Citizen
Roger Eastman, City of Flagstaff
Phil Keesee, Citizen
Ed Larsen, City of Flagstaff
Chuck Ley, City of Flagstaff
Hillarie Nickerson, Citizen
Phil Scandura, Citizen

2. Recap Focus Group purpose

The Focus Group will be outcome focused with a strong emphasis on general issues rather than getting into the details of technical code review. A primary goal is to ensure that the code implements the Regional Plan.

3. Discussion regarding signage and related issues associated with the rewrite of the Land Development Code

Mr. Keesee gave the group a quick overview of the July 1st CAG meeting and the discussion on overlapping issues, design guidelines, the need for an interpretive manual, and issues associated with overlap between outdoor lighting and signs.

Mr. Keesee created a list of issues to discuss (See attached).

1. Off-site signage

Historically, the consensus in the community has been no off-site signs (resulted from past discussion on bill boards) as there was concern with proliferation of signs along main roads. A-frames etc. are an effort to reinforce the notion of no permanent off-site signs. The group agreed to maintain the rule of no off-premise signs.

An option is to use the “directional signs” provision in the Code to provided direction to a property without a street frontage.

Real estate signs should be added into the temporary signs section.

We should also look at the recently proposed House Bill which limits a municipality’s ability to regulate political. Gerry Craig to provide additional information on this.

2. Height, size and quantity

The group indicated that it isn’t necessary to increase the height limit for freestanding signs. The group would like to keep the existing height regulations, with the exception being 12-feet allowed for all businesses without design enhancements in place. This would allow multi-tenant complexes to put more signs for their tenants on the monument.

It was noted that the existing building sign regulations are good for height. Design enhancements need to be tweaked (currently does not work for maintenance, etc. because of the materials promoted in them) Instead of material enhancements, it may be possible to consider area enhancements (i.e. wider signs). The group agreed that single businesses are OK at 10-feet (per the existing Code) but would like design enhancements to be more achievable.

The consensus was that the current size and quantity rules are OK per the existing Code.

The group discussed the height of signs based on the transect and the character of the district.

Clear rules must be established for measuring height. Further discussion concluded that we would use the top of curb elevation from which to determine sign height when the sign is placed in a hole or otherwise below grade. All other signs would be measured from natural grade.

The new Code needs to have separate rules for big box buildings (i.e. larger signs for Mall). A comparison with sign rules in other communities on this issue is needed.

3. Aesthetics of Signs

Definition. Must be based on character within the City (e.g. Downtown would have more “period” smaller signs compared to Route 66 or the Mall).

Sign regulations must be based on context. The Downtown businesses are mostly OK with the current guidelines and standards.

It was suggested that the local sign industry should show clients which signs work and which do not.

Consultant should propose language to include ideas for enhancing the aesthetics of signs in Flagstaff based on context and character

The group feels that there is no need to regulate letter height and that other existing rules deal with this adequately for the majority of the city. Perhaps a letter height rule could apply to Downtown and other walkable areas to allow the creation of more pedestrian friendly signs?

The sign standards for live-work units and cottage industries in residential areas need to be revised to allow for bigger signs (currently only home occupations are permitted in residential areas with limited signage)

Major and minor road definitions are not clear or easily obtainable from the City of Flagstaff. Perhaps include a link to the Regional Plan for ease of use and provide a copy at the front counter and/or add to the Sign Permit packet.

A review of the ICC Sign Code may be needed for guidelines on letter and sign size relative to speed.

For a future change of designation from a minor to a major arterial, sign size should be based on the ultimate classification of the arterial.

New issues that were discussed and resolved:

- Clear view zones need to be defined in the Engineering Standards rather than in the zoning code.
- Murals – if there is no text on the mural, it's not a sign. But if text is included, then it's a sign and would be subject to the sign code.
- Accommodate signage for businesses in Downtown that front an alley. A simple way to deal with this is to amend the "frontage" definition so that it also includes alleys

4. **Next meeting:**
Thursday, July 16, 2009, at 8:30 am.

5. **Adjournment** at 10:05 am.